

# State Test for Paraprofessionals

South Dakota has adopted the ParaPro assessment from ETS as its official test for meeting the requirements for paraprofessionals as outlined in Title I Part A, Section 1119. In order for a paraprofessional to meet requirements, the para must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education (defined in SD as 48 credits)
- (2) Obtained an associate's or higher degree
- (3) Met a rigorous standard of quality, and can demonstrate--through a formal State assessment--knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading/language arts, writing, and mathematics.

ETS will be notified and information will be sent out to each district as to the process for purchasing slots for the test. Districts may purchase a block of tests with a purchase order and will be given a block of time to complete the tests. The state will receive a password and districts will be assigned a number.

confirmation within two weeks of completion of the test. Paper/pencil administration will take a little longer for results to be returned.

The state must work with ETS in setting the cut score for acceptable passage of the test. It is anticipated that this performance standards setting process will take place this spring. A panel consisting of SD paraprofessionals and supervising teachers will take part in the process conducted by ETS and monitored by DECA staff. The cut score would be announced sometime near July 1<sup>st</sup>.

It is imperative that paras understand that while they may be able to take the test this spring and get the results of the test shortly thereafter, they would not know whether or not they passed the test until the cut score is announced. On the other hand, having paras take the test this spring would be very beneficial to the process as we would have a number of actual tests taken before the standards setting workshop. This would help us in finalizing the cut score by having actual test scores to give a realistic picture of what scores in this state might be.

Information about the ParaPro test  
can be found at:  
<http://www.ets.org/parapro/>

It is suggested that the district print off or request a copy of ParaPro Registration Bulletin. The bulletin provides information about the paper-based format of the test only, but it will provide you with information about the test. Test preparation materials will be available from ETS sometime this spring. Districts may want to purchase these study materials for shared use within the district.

Additional information will be forwarded to districts as it becomes available.

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## AYP Status Reports

We are working on trying to confirm what Title I programs are offered in each school and what the make-up of the learning center is. This will assure accuracy with the AYP status report.

We have found several discrepancies on the applications as to what we have reported. Some one from our department may be calling your school to confirm which group of students are being served Title I in your school. We are trying to get this done as soon as we can so we can get the AYP status reports out to you.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

## Housekeeping

If you haven't done so already, this might be a good time to do a little house cleaning related to information on the old IASA Title I regulations and guidance. Anything pertaining to that era can be thrown, unless it is supplemental information that you think is still relevant to our new world of NCLB. Check your file cabinets and book shelves for the old information.

Local program information for the past 3 years must be kept for audit purposes. Migrant COE's must be kept on file for 7 years.



## New Face

*Hi, I'm Beth Schiltz and I joined the DECA team on November 12, 2002. I started my education career as an elementary educator in a small country school in eastern Wyoming. I moved to eastern South Dakota two years later and taught in a small school for 17 years. Of that 17 years, I spent the last 7 working with Title I. I have two children whom I have relocated to Pierre with me. Currently, I am working with the Supplemental Services that is required for schools who are in level two of school improvement, and the Schoolwide & School Improvement programs. I am looking forward to meeting everyone and working with you as well as working with the staff here at DECA.*

## DAKOTA STEP: New Assessment Plan

by Gary Skoglund

After lengthy research and effort to develop an online assessment for the schools in South Dakota, we have concluded that it may be premature to offer the Dakota STEP assessment (an augmented SAT-10 test) in an online format for Spring 2003. Therefore, **STEP will be a paper and pencil test** for grades 3-8 and grade 11 in Spring 2003. The vendor, Harcourt Educational Measurement, will provide test booklets and answer sheets similar to those used in the past for the SAT 9. DECA will continue to pursue an online option for future years.

The test window for STEP will be March 26 to April 18, 2003. Workshops for test administration are scheduled as follows: February 24-Rapid City, February 25-Pierre, February 26-Aberdeen and February 27 and 28 in Sioux Falls. Registration is available on the DECA website.



## Transition to Kindergarten Training

As promised in the November newsletter, regional training opportunities have been scheduled to assist districts with coordination and transition requirements outlined in Title I Part A. Detailed information about the district's transition plan will be a required component in the LEA Consolidated Application for 2003-2004.

Training sites were set up by regional service of Head Start agencies. Districts and the respective Head Start program serving them will be asked to attend the same training site.

Diane Lowery and Betsy Pollock will conduct the training. The daylong workshop will start at 9:00 and end at 3:00 with lunch provided.

Districts are encouraged to send at least one, but preferably a team to the training. Consider inviting someone to represent area preschool and childcare centers as part of your team. All Head Start agencies will send appropriate representatives as well.

The following dates and sites have been arranged. Participating Head Starts are listed for each site assignment. Districts served by these Head Start agencies must attend the same site.

A formal letter with additional information and a required registration form will be sent to each district and Head Start program.

**Mon., March 3 – Rapid City**  
Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn / Salon D  
505 N. Fifth St.

Head Starts: Ogallala, Youth and Family Services, Badlands, Dakota Transitional

**Tues., March 4 – Pierre**  
Kings Inn / Regency Room  
220 S. Pierre St.

Head Starts: Cheyenne River, Oahe Child Development Center, Crow Creek, and Lower Brule

**Mon., March 10 – Aberdeen**  
BW Ramkota / Arikara Room  
1400 8<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Head Starts: Sisseton, Standing Rock, and Northeast SD

**Tues., March 11 – Watertown**  
Second Street Station  
15 Second St. SW  
Head Start: Interlakes Community Action

**Tues., March 25 – Yankton**  
BW Kelly Inn / Minervas Conv. Ctr.  
1607 E. Hwy 50  
Head Starts: USD, South Central, Rosebud, and Sioux Falls



## South Dakota Reading Council State Conference

*Reading Takes You Places*



**April 3-5, 2003**

**Rapid City, SD**

For more information visit the following website.

<http://www.sdrc.dsu.edu/frame.htm>

or contact  
Connie Humble at 456-2763 or  
Judy Gram at 718-2374

## International Reading Association

48th Annual Convention:  
Making a Difference in Reading

**Orlando, Florida, USA**  
**May 4-8, 2003**

Information about this conference can be found at this website.

<http://www.reading.org/2003/>

## NCLB Statute, Regulations, and Guidance

The statute or law is what is in your blue book on Title I. Law for the other Titles are also available. Regulations are legally binding documents that clarify statute. Guidance is not legally binding, however, it is a document that further defines regulations and should be considered when making judgments about the law and regulations. All three sources should be considered.

Go to the federal website at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) to find these documents under the NCLB site.

## 5% Set-aside of Title I Funds

The 5% that districts are required to set-aside from the Title I allocation must be used specifically for the needs of section 1119. The priority for the use of those funds is as follows:

1. Title I paraprofessionals and teachers - whatever is needed for them to meet requirements. This includes all core content area teachers and all aides providing instructional services in a schoolwide program.
2. Core content area teachers in Title I schools.

These funds may not be used for teachers who are not in Title I

schools. Core content area teachers in non-Title I schools who do not meet the criteria of being highly qualified may be supported with other Title funds.

The 5% set aside can be used to pay substitute teachers only if they are substituting for a teacher or an aide who is attending a class to meet requirements under section 1119. This would also include general training for aides related to reading, writing, or math in preparation for taking the test for paraprofessionals.



## Parental Involvement Workshops

- Beth Schiltz and Terri Cordrey

We are working with the Parent Resource Network to set up regional workshops. These workshops will provide help to the districts in working with adult training (helping parents read assessments, what they mean, how to help students raise achievement), along with providing information about the services of the Parent Resource Network.

We are looking at 4 possibly 5 regional workshops (hopefully by the end of March, or early April before the Consolidate Application comes out). Look for further updates in the near future.

## State Accountability System

Diane Lowery

DECA submitted its plan for the statewide accountability system to USDOE on the due date of Jan. 31, 2003. The State's accountability system must be effective in ensuring that all public schools and LEAs in the State make adequate yearly progress (AYP) as defined by the state. The system must be based on the State's academic standards and assessments and other academic indicators such as graduation rate for high schools and attendance rate for elementary and middle schools.

The statewide accountability system must include sanctions and rewards that the State will use to hold public schools and LEAs accountable for student achievement and for making AYP. However, the State is not required to subject schools and LEAs not participating under Title I Part A to the requirements of section 1116.

USDOE will review the state's plan and a Peer Review team will visit SD to meet with DECA officials to clarify issues in the plan. Final approval of the accountability plan must take place by May when the remaining components of the state's consolidated application is due to USDOE.



# National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by Stephanie Weideman

## NAEP Update

Often called the "Nation's Report Card", The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative, continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in school in a variety of key subject areas. NAEP is mandated to assess

reading and mathematics in grades 4 and 8 every 2 years starting in the 2002/2003 school year.



Beginning January 27 and ending March 7, 2003, NAEP will assess students in grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics. In one South Dakota grade 12 school, NAEP will also conduct a field test assessment in reading and mathematics. All assessments will be conducted by NAEP field staff, and materials will be provided by NAEP. Assessments will take 90 minutes of each student's time.

For more information visit the NAEP web site at

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>

for general information including a state profile and sample NAEP assessment questions.

You may also contact the South Dakota NAEP Coordinator:

Stephanie Weideman

700 Governors Drive

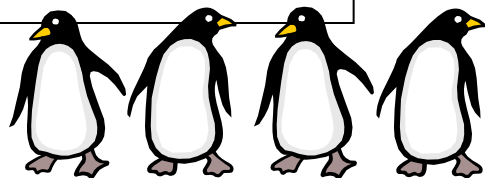
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## Noteworthy Perspectives: Keeping the Focus

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) has a publication entitled *Noteworthy Perspectives: Keeping the Focus* by Gaddy, Dean, and Kendall. This document offers guidance to help local educators--teachers and administrators--achieve the fundamental goal of the *No Child Left Behind Act*: improved learning for all. The text of this document can be found at the following website:  
<http://www.mcrel.org/products/noteworthy/focus.pdf>



## South Dakota Early Childhood Conference – Betsy Pollock

The annual South Dakota Early Childhood Conference, jointly sponsored by the SD Association for the Education of Young Children (SDAEYC) and the SD Head Start Association, will be in Sioux Falls at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel on February 27- March 1, 2003. *Hands and Hearts for Children* features a variety of pre-conference and conference sessions designed with the early childhood professional in mind. Keynote speakers include Jane Kitson, *Making Music the Magical Link to Language and Literacy* and Jim Greenman, *Places for Childhood in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Registration fees for Regular Members are \$80 or nonmember \$90. There are two extra luncheons at a cost of \$10.00 each.

For a program session guide and /or registration form contact:

- Tami Skorczewski at 605-367-8444 or [petetamisk@midco.net](mailto:petetamisk@midco.net) or
- Marlys Engebretson at 605-328-7164 or [engebrem@siouxvalley.org](mailto:engebrem@siouxvalley.org).





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**Title I Email Directory**

If you would like to have your name on the Title I Email Directory, submit name, agency and email address to Julie Elrod at [julie.elrod@state.sd.us](mailto:julie.elrod@state.sd.us)

VISIT US ON THE WEB!!  
[www.state.sd.us/deca/ta](http://www.state.sd.us/deca/ta)